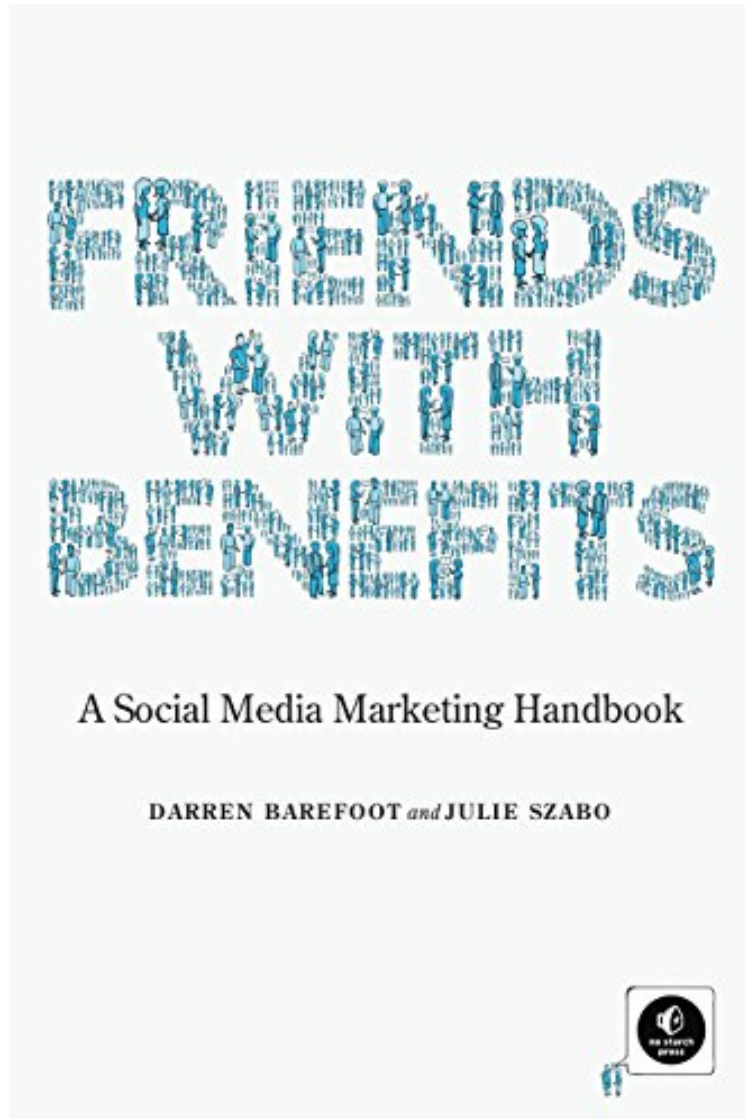


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Friends with Benefits: A Social Media Marketing Handbook

Darren Barefoot, Szabo Julie, Julie Szabo
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Darren Barefoot, Szabo Julie, Julie Szabo : Friends with Benefits: A Social Media Marketing Handbook before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Friends with Benefits: A Social Media Marketing Handbook:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Best Social Media BookBy SoMisguided.comStill one of the best books out there on managing and planning for social media, in particular because it offers solid examples of successful and unsuccessful campaign (with numbers!). It's a really helpful place to start for companies (and students) trying to work social media into the marketing mix, and there are some great tips in there that I go back to even as a veteran to

the socmeds. This book is required reading for my university students, and a gift I provide to new clients because it really helps people understand the best tone and approach to take in regards to marketing online. 3 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Very Basic
By Steven Rader
This is a basic overview of sites: MySpace, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter. Much beyond explaining each of the sites and their basic functionality, this book lacks depth. Social media 101 here.
12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. The Best Social Media Marketing Handbook
By Chris Abraham
When I started my social media marketing firm three years ago I had an advantage. By autumn, 2006, I had passed through New Media Strategies as Technology Strategist and Edelman's elite Public Affairs Online Advocacy team. Even so, my business partner, Mark Harshman, and I made a lot of mistakes, walked through mine fields, and eventually started climbing more hills than we lost. I started Abraham Harshman almost exactly three years ago and I would have really appreciated Friends with Benefits: A Social Media Marketing Handbook by Darren Baerfoot and Julie Szabo. Actually, I am kind of bummed that I didn't write this book myself because I certainly could have and should have -- but I didn't. (Via Friends with Benefits spoke to me because I have "lonely nerd" deep inside of me and this book goes all the way back into the years of 80s computing when I, too, was surfing the proto-Internet via a 1200-baud modem. Like the book asserts in chapter one, we lonely nerds weren't lonely, "the early BBSs were actually very social" and so were we. Fast-forward from the early 80s -- when I was doing dial-up and geeking out in Honolulu Bulletin Board Systems -- twenty years and "social media" is invented. No, re-invented. Darren Baerfoot and Julie Szabo get it and they lay it all out into this book and basically wrote the book on starting and building Abraham Harshman -- or a firm or agency like it -- from scratch. And not just starting an agency but integrating social media marketing into your advertising or PR agency or even adding smart social media capacity into your big, medium or even small business. I am impressed. According to the book, "social media marketing is using social media channels to promote your company and its products. This type of marketing should be a subset of your online marketing activities, complementary to your traditional web-based promotional strategies like email newsletters and online advertising campaigns. Social media marketing qualifies as a form of viral or word-of-mouth marketing." The goal of Friends with Benefits is to take social media, social media marketing, viral marketing, and word-of-mouth marketing and answer "so what" and "what now?" What I like about this book is that it is not a book on Twitter or Facebook. It answers what and why with a how that is comprehensive and includes geekier-but-essential topics such as RSS, corporate blog, and even social media news releases. The real value of the book kicks in in chapter 3, "Flagging a Ride: Finding the Right Bloggers and Complementary" when the book goes into the explicit details surrounding blogger discovery, blogger prospecting, how to choose the right blog and blogger based on their type (personal, professional, or corporate) and popularity (size matters), including how best to judge bloggers and blogs using various anonymous metrics and metrics tools like [...], Alexa Rank, Google PR, and TechRati Rank. And from more instinctual reviews such as checking out Google Trends, mentions on Google, the number of RSS subscribers on Feedburner, mentions on blogrolls, popularity on Twitter/Facebook/FriendFeed, frequency of posting, volume of comments, professionalisms, etc. Chapter 4 addresses Netiquette, something that a lot of books give very little lip service to -- a small sacrifice to Internet protocol. Friends with Benefits offers quite a solid list of lessons in netiquette: Listen first, take baby steps, make friends, lay your cards on the table, bloggers aren't journalists, your reputation precedes you, don't be a social media spammer, and don't fib -- probably the most serious list I have found, and one that I have learned needs to be taken dead-seriously. I tried to suggest my favorites, but they're all important to consider, although making friends -- spending time together outside the office, if you will -- is probably one of the most important because when you reach out to anyone for help, especially when it is earned media (meaning you're not paying these bloggers -- or anyone -- to write about you or your client), they're going to ask, "who the hell are you?" and "do I know you?" If you're nobody they know, people are more likely to not make decisions that are compassionate or human, they're more likely to just assume that you're not much better than a bot -- don't let them. Chapter 5 deals with the social media pitch. Make it compelling, relevant, timely, exclusive, personal, brief, comprehensive, sensitive, conversational, linked, access, and offers an incentive (or gift, in our parlance). This is exactly the list I would have written -- this is the list my team would have written, too. There are also warnings about blogging (payola) and other untoward things not to do, including best practices in follow-up. In fact, the value-add of this list is amazing and with a little help you could very well use Friends with Benefits as a play-book for your burgeoning (or suffering) social media

practicing -- and the only reason I am proud instead of threatened is that my company actually offers all the doing of the work for our clients and not just social media consulting. That said, this book is going to put a hell of a lot of social media experts (SME) out to pasture when their bosses read this book and learn that their director of social media doesn't know what he's doing. I recommend this book to all the SMEs out there -- read this before your boss does. Chapter 6 is titled "Measuring Success: How to Monitor the Web." This chapter answers quite a few questions about defining success and return on investment (ROI), the holy grails of social marketing and the reason why too many companies who need SMM are hesitant to take the next step, boldly. What's smart about this chapter is that Baerfoot and Szabo tell it like it is: you need to ask your client and yourself how you define success. Are you interested in brand-building? Growing traffic? Converting to sales? Social media marketing? Increased buzz? How are you going to do this? Monitoring? Listening? The issue of managing expectations is also raised. Unlike banner ads, that turn on or off like a tap, social marketing can be a slow-burn. Being "realistic" and "humane" are recommended. Then, after discussing what success could be, *Friends With Benefits* discusses web monitoring and how to keep track of your successes and failures and then how to follow-up. Following up is key. Moving the relationship forward is key, too. Bloggers -- indeed everyone -- hates being used and there are too many examples of a win, a success, and a post not being followed-up with a neighborly thank you in the form of a private email or a public comment. Remember how your momma told you to be polite and to write a thank you note? Well, come on! Make momma proud. Chapter 7 addresses risk. And there are risks, such as the campaign not getting off the ground, bloggers backlash, the crowd talks back, you get rejected, your initiative dies on the vine, you put all your eggs in social media and your other channels shrivel, not being proactive (or staying in front of it), you will be measured, someone gets cold feet in the organization and the campaign is killed, or even get too much success too soon and you collapse -- #fail -- under its weight. Good advice at the end: proceed with caution, not cowardice." In my experience, campaigns fail from lack of commitment -- from fear and cowardice. Before you get out there to engage, you had better be willing to commit: be brave. Chapter 8 deals with damage control and crisis management and is short and sweet, dealing with how to deal with crises with a useful crisis management primer. There's too much stuff in there that I can't pitch here but they do recommend that it is essential to keep head of the crisis: create a crisis response document, create a response blog and social media platform (and repository) right now instead of after the crisis occurs (though it is never too late) and be willing to engage and not hide down at the bottom of the spider hole. I am going to go through the rest of the book faster because I really believe that the most important book comes in the first 8 chapters. Chapter 9 reminds us that MySpace is still amazingly relevant with about 125 million users worldwide and needs to be respected and the members can and should be engaged if approached. Same thing with Chapter 10 on the subject of Facebook, offering case studies, including a case study my firm took part in: Sharp's [...] campaign on Facebook done for Lowe NY. Chapter 11 deals with [...] and other video-sharing sites. And Chapter 12 briefly addresses microblogging and Twitter. Each of these chapters are brief primers, dealing a little bit with applications, with widgets, with culture and pros/cons, and a little about marketing. To me, chapters 8-12 are throw-aways. If you're looking for a book on Twitter marketing, there are better more comprehensive guides. To avoid chapters 8-12 would have been too much of an omission and social networks systems are too sexy right now to leave out; however, this book is invaluable and there's nothing like it out there in terms of a realistic portrayal of what works and what doesn't. This book teaches you to measure twice and cut once and to train the reader up on the culture, the expectations, and the pros/cons of the social web. Folks online are not numbers or clicks or even consumers, they're people and they're hanging -- and have had -- lots of parties, socials, and get-togethers before you ever got there and you need to be very respectful of the them and their current conversation and when and if to interrupt. This book isn't out yet. You'll have to wait as I reviewed an advance galley of the final book. What I would do is pre-order the book -- it is sure to be something you will consume and maybe keep to yourself as your very own company's private advantage. Now that I see that the book was produced by No Starch Press I kick myself again -- I pitched them on this book three years ago. Oh well, like I said at the beginning of this post, the best man and woman won.

The rules of marketing have changed. Savvy marketing professionals know that they must engage with individuals directly on the Web, and smart businesses know that customers can become friends with benefits. *Friends With Benefits* shows you how to get into the online marketing game. A guide filled with tips, tricks, and real-world case studies, *Friends With Benefits* shows how you can increase your company's online visibility and Web traffic and win

over online influencers. *Friends With Benefits* explains how to:

- Connect with potential customers and join their conversations
- Tweak your website to support your social media marketing campaigns
- Promote your products or brand and manage the toughest negative online feedback
- Track marketing campaigns, monitor discussions, and measure success

With viral videos racking up millions of views and Twitter mavens influencing thousands of their friends, social media marketing is an essential new tool for every marketer's toolbox. The expert authors of *Friend With Benefits* guide you through the social media landscape, where authenticity and connections are more important than the size of your marketing budget, and real results can be just a few clicks away.

About the Author Darren Barefoot and Julie Szabo have run social media marketing campaigns for national retailers like Best Buy, Future Shop, and Brother International. They've been quoted as experts on social media on the CBC and BBC, and in *Wired* magazine, *The Wall Street Journal*, and dozens of other magazines, TV, and radio programs. Founders of Northern Voice, Canada's social media conference, they regularly speak around North America on social media, marketing, and emerging technology. Darren has 10,000 daily readers at DarrenBarefoot.com.